



Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins



Page 7

For the BEST & the BIGGEST Steak
and so much more!

Lobby Bar Menu

FRIDAYS
2 FOR 1 Sangria

Lunch Special
EVERYDAY 11:30AM - 5PM

\$30.35 +15%SC
TAX IS INCLUDED.

Local Deal
SATURDAY

15%OFF For Locals

Open daily from 11:30am - 11pm. Sundays Closed. Wilhelminastraat #80. Oranjestad, Aruba. Phone: +297 582-3677 • www.elgaucho-aruba.com

Pinchos Grill & Bar

Now in its 20th plus year, owned and run by a local family.

Open 7 days a week, as of 5:00PM
Full Service Bar
Live Music on weekends

Reservations: (297) 583 2666 or reservations@pinchosgrillaruba.com



What lawmakers are saying about Trump's demolition of the East Wing

By KEVIN FREKING

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

They're divided along party lines on policy. They're divided on the government shutdown. And now federal lawmakers are divided on the demolition of the East Wing of the White House to make room for the 90,000-square-foot ballroom that President Donald Trump wants to build.

The stunning images of the teardown this week have left Democratic lawmakers incensed. Republicans, meanwhile, are likening it to a long line of White House renovations over the years. There was Franklin Delano Roosevelt's swimming pool addition, now covered over, they said. There was Barack Obama's basketball court, a tennis court adapted so that it could be used for tennis and basketball. And William Taft added the Oval Office, Speaker Mike Johnson, R-La., noted.

"The ballroom is going to be glorious," Johnson said. Across the Capitol, Democratic senators incorporated the teardown photos



Debris is seen at a largely demolished part of the East Wing of the White House, Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025, in Washington, before construction of a new ballroom.

Associated Press

into Sen. Jeff Merkley's 22 hour-plus speech on the Senate floor.

Sen. Tim Kaine, D-Va., showed Merkley a picture of the smashed East Wing and asked the Oregon senator to describe what he saw and the significance of it.

"Here we have evidence of the president tearing down

a symbol of our Republic and building a symbol that is really a symbol about authoritarian power, about a government that serves the rich," Merkley said.

Trump says the White House needs a large entertaining space and has complained that the East Room, the current largest space in the White House, is too small

holding about 200 people. He has frowned on the past practice of presidents hosting state dinners and other large events in tents on the South Lawn.

The White House has said the ballroom will be ready for use well before Trump's term ends in January 2029, an ambitious timeline. Trump said "me and some

friends of mine" will pay for the ballroom, at no cost to taxpayers.

The White House saw the addition of the East Wing in 1942 to house additional staff and offices. The White House Historical Association says the construction was controversial due to its timing during wartime. Congressional Republicans labeled the expenditure as wasteful, with some accusing Roosevelt of using the project to bolster his presidency's image.

Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer's opening remarks on the Senate floor Wednesday sought to tie the president's work on the East Wing to the current government shutdown, saying that Trump was not focused on dealing with the issue of threatened health care coverage for millions of Americans but on "vanity projects like this one that don't do anything to benefit the American people. They only benefit Trump and his ego."

Republican senators were dismissive at times of questions about the East Wing teardown. □

California union proposes taxing billionaires to offset Medicaid cuts

By SOPHIE AUSTIN

Associated Press

SACRAMENTO, Calif.

(AP) — A major union announced a proposal Thursday to impose a one-time 5% tax on billionaires in California to address federal

eral funding cuts to health care for low-income people.

Proponents, including the Service Employees International Union, hope to place the statewide measure before voters next year. The

tax would be on the net worth of California's richest residents. A small portion of the money would also help fund K-12 education since the federal government has threatened to withhold grant money from public schools.

Backers of the measure sent a request to Attorney General Rob Bonta this week to get approval to start collecting signatures. The proposal would have to receive more than 870,000 signatures by next spring to qualify for the ballot in November 2026. If it qualifies, it's not guaranteed to pass. Democratic Gov. Gavin Newsom, for example, has opposed tax hikes in the past, including those specifically targeting the rich. Proponents of the

initiative said it was critical to backfill cuts to Medicaid because lives are at stake. "If we do not do this, millions of people are going to lose health care, an untold number of people will go without treatment and there will be tragedy after tragedy," said Dave Regan, president of SEIU-United Healthcare Workers West. Billionaires would have to pay for tax year 2026, and the money could start being appropriated in 2027. The tax would generate \$100 billion in revenue for the state, backers say. The initiative says it's "designed to make the State tax system more equitable."

The big tax and spending cuts law President Donald Trump signed earlier this

year will cut more than \$1 trillion over a decade from Medicaid and federal food assistance.

The California Budget and Policy Center, a think tank in Sacramento, estimated the state could lose \$30 billion in federal funding a year for Medicaid, which would result in up to 3.4 million people losing their coverage. Newsom said earlier this month that people enrolled in Covered California, the state's health insurance marketplace, could see their monthly health care bills nearly double next year as a result of the spending cuts law.

"California has led the nation in expanding access to affordable health care, but Donald Trump is ripping it away," he said. □



Pediatrician Irving Phillips, left, examines a 16-month-old boy at a CommuniCARE+OLE clinic, June 26, 2025, in Davis, Calif.

Associated Press

Senate rejects bills to pay federal workers during government shutdown

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
and KEVIN FREKING
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Senate on Thursday rejected dueling partisan bills to pay federal workers during the government shutdown, with both Republicans and Democrats deflecting blame as many employees are set to miss their first full paycheck at the end of this week.

With unpaid staff and law enforcement standing nearby, Republicans objected as Democrats proposed a voice vote on their legislation to pay all federal workers and prevent President Donald Trump's administration from mass firings. Democrats then blocked a Republican bill to pay employees who are working and not furloughed, 54-45.

The back and forth on day 23 of the government shutdown comes as the two parties are at a protracted impasse with no signs of either side giving in. Democrats say they won't vote to reopen the government until Republicans negotiate with them on extending expiring subsidies under the Affordable Care Act. Republicans say they won't negotiate on the subsidies until Democrats vote to reopen the government. Trump is mostly disengaged and headed to Asia in the coming days.

Dueling bills to pay workers



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., holds a news conference on day 23 of the government shutdown, at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025.

The Republican bill by Sen. Ron Johnson of Wisconsin would pay "excepted" workers who still have to come to work during the current government shutdown and any future shutdowns. The bill would "end this punishing federal workers for our dysfunction forever," Johnson said. But Democrats say the legislation is unfair to the workers who are involuntarily furloughed and could give Cabinet secretaries too much discretion as to who gets paid.

Johnson's bill is "nothing more than another tool for Trump to hurt federal workers and American families and to keep this shutdown

going for as long as he wants," Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer said ahead of the votes. The Democratic bills would have paid a much larger swath of workers as most federal workers are set to miss paychecks over the next week. "It seems like everyone in this chamber agrees we should pay federal workers," Sen. Gary Peters, D-Mich., said ahead of the vote. But because of the shutdown, "they are paying a price."

Essential services start to dwindle

As Congress is unable to agree on a way forward,

money for essential services could soon reach a crisis point.

Transportation Secretary Sean Duffy said Thursday that his message to air traffic controllers during the government shutdown is "come to work, even if you do not get a paycheck." Duffy said that air traffic controllers will miss their first full paycheck on Tuesday and that some are having to make choices to pay the mortgage and other bills, at times by taking a second job.

"I cannot guarantee you your flight is going to be on time. I cannot guarantee your flight is not going to be cancelled," Duffy said.

Payments for federal food and heating assistance could also run out soon, along with funding for Head Start preschool programs, several states have warned.

Open enrollment approaches

Another deadline approaching is Nov. 1, the beginning of open enrollment for people who use the marketplaces created by the Affordable Care Act. Democrats are holding out for negotiations with Republicans as they seek to extend subsidies that started in 2021, during the COVID-19 pandemic, and expire at the end of the year. But any solution would be hard to put in place once people start purchasing their plans.

Some Republicans are open to extending the tax credits, with changes, and lawmakers in both parties have been talking behind the scenes about possible compromises. But it's unclear whether they will be able to find an agreement that satisfies both Republicans and Democrats — or if leadership on either side would be willing to budge. "Republicans have been perfectly clear that we're willing to have a discussion about health care, just not while government funding is being held hostage," Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., said Thursday. □



Sen. Jeff Merkley, D-Ore., speaks during a news conference on the Equality Act at the Capitol, April 29, 2025, in Washington.

Associated Press

By MARY CLARE JALONICK
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — Led by Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley, Democrats seized the Senate floor on Wednesday to protest President

Democratic Sen. Merkley of Oregon speaks for more than 22 hours to protest Trump amid shutdown

Donald Trump's presidency amid the government shutdown and push for Republicans to negotiate with them on expiring health subsidies.

Merkley spoke for more than 22 hours — from 6:21 p.m. Tuesday to 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday — pausing for lengthy questions from other Democratic senators. His speech was one of the longest in Senate history, just short of a similar speech in April by Sen.

Cory Booker of New Jersey. Booker, who was also protesting Trump, broke the record for longest continuous Senate speech by going for more than 25 hours, surpassing a 1957 speech by Sen. Strom Thurmond of South Carolina. Thurmond was filibustering the advance of the Civil Rights Act.

The senator's talk-a-thon came as Democrats have forced the government shutdown over their de-

mands to extend government health care subsidies, and as Republicans have refused to negotiate over the expiring tax credits until Democrats vote to reopen the government. Democrats have voted 12 times to keep it closed — most recently Wednesday evening — and the two sides have made little progress toward a resolution.

Merkley said on the Senate floor that Republicans

were the ones shutting down the government "to continue the strategy of slashing Americans' health care" after passing cuts to Medicaid and other programs over the summer. He used several hours of his speech to describe what he said were Trump's authoritarian moves, including attacks on the press and policies that Democrats say are enriching billionaires at the expense of regular people. □

Trump backs off planned surge of federal agents into San Francisco after talking to the mayor

By **TERRY CHEA** and **CHRIS-TOPHER WEBER**

Associated Press

ALAMEDA, Calif. (AP) —

President Donald Trump said Thursday that he's backing off a planned surge of federal agents into San Francisco after speaking to the mayor, as protesters gathered outside a U.S. Coast Guard base where they were located. Trump had been threatening to send the National Guard to the city to to quell crime and U.S. Customs and Border Protection agents began arriving in the region early in the day for a possible ramp up of immigration enforcement.

The president posted on social media that Mayor Daniel Lurie told him Wednesday night that the city was making progress in reducing crime.

Trump said he agreed to let San Francisco keep trying on its own.

Several hundred people, many singing hymns and carrying signs saying, "Protect our neighbors" and "No ICE or troops in the Bay," referring to U.S. Im-



A person pushes a protester blocking a caravan of U.S. Customs and Border Protection personnel trying to enter Coast Guard Base Alameda on Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025, in Oakland, Calif.

Associated Press

migration and Customs Enforcement, assembled just after dawn at Coast Guard Island in Alameda, California. Police used at least one flash-bang grenade to clear a handful of demonstrators from the entrance as CBP vehicles drove onto the base. Organizers urged protesters to remain

peaceful, as a line of Coast Guard officers in helmets watched from just outside the entrance.

Lurie said he received a phone call from Trump Wednesday night in which the president told him he was "calling off any plans for a federal deployment in San Francisco." Lurie said

Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem "reaffirmed that direction" in a conversation Thursday morning.

At an afternoon news conference, Lurie said he welcomes the city's "continued partnership" with the Drug Enforcement Agency and other federal authorities to get illegal narcotics

off the streets and contribute to San Francisco's falling crime rates.

"But having the military and militarized immigration enforcement in our city will hinder our recovery," the mayor said. Trump's assertions of out-of-control crime in the city of roughly 830,000 have baffled local and state leaders, who point to statistics showing that many crimes are at record lows.

It was not clear if the president was canceling a National Guard deployment or calling off immigration enforcement by CBP agents. At his news conference, Lurie said he could not clarify and could only repeat what the president had told him.

California Gov. Gavin Newsom's office said on X: "Trump has finally, for once, listened to reason and heard what we have been saying from the beginning. The Bay Area is a shining example of what makes California so special, and any attempt to erode our progress would damage the work we've done." □

Michigan terminates controversial EV battery plant and seeks to claw back millions in incentives

By **ISABELLA VOLMERT**

Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) —

Michigan is demanding millions of dollars in incentives back from a Chinese company after plans to build an electric vehicle battery plant collapsed following years of pushback against the project from neighbors and members of Congress. Democratic Gov. Gretchen Whitmer supported the \$2.36 billion factory in 2022, and state lawmakers approved nearly \$175 million in incentives for the project. The state is now holding Gotion Inc. in default of \$23.6 million, accusing the company of abandoning the project.

"While this is not the outcome we hoped for, we recognize the tremendous responsibility we have to the

people we serve to make sure their hard-earned tax dollars are spent wisely and appropriately," Danielle Emerson, a spokesperson with the Michigan Economic Development Corporation, said in a statement.

Representatives for Gotion, which is headquartered in California, did not respond to multiple messages seeking comment.

In a letter dated Sept. 17, Michigan informed Gotion that it was in default

of economic development grant obligations because no "eligible activities" had occurred on the site's property in over 120 days.

According to the MEDC, the state is seeking to claw back \$23.6 million that was disbursed toward the purchase of the site's land near Big Rapids, about 200 miles (322 kilometers) northwest of Detroit. \$26.4 million remaining from the grant that was not spent will be returned to the state, Emerson said. Citing a lack of progress on the project, a different \$125 million grant was not distributed to Gotion.

The news was first reported by Crain's Detroit Business. The state also said two project-related lawsuits are imposing a "material adverse effect" on its progress,

which counts as grounds for default. The letter said that if the defaults are not resolved in 30 days, the state expects repayment of \$23.6 million. That deadline passed Oct. 17.

Residents of nearby Green Township so firmly opposed the project, some over environmental concerns, that voters in 2023 recalled five local elected officials who supported bringing the factory to the area.

Auto manufacturing is the lifeblood of Michigan's economy, which has been hard hit by tariffs imposed this year on the industry and Canada. When the project was proposed, officials said the factory would produce cathodes and anodes, two components key to electric vehicle batteries, as well as over 2,000 jobs. □



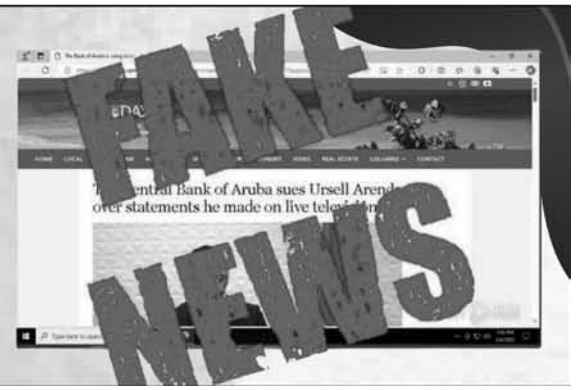
The state Capitol building is seen on Dec. 12, 2012, in Lansing, Mich.

Associated Press

Be aware of scams on social media!

Don't click on sponsored ads that are using Aruba Today's likeness. Visit only our official Facebook Page, Aruba Today News or our website, www.arubatoday.com.

If you encounter any problems, we are here to help: news@arubatoday.com



Belgium calls on EU partners to share risk if they want to use frozen Russian assets to aid Ukraine



Belgium's Prime Minister Bart De Wever, center, speaks with European Union foreign policy chief Kaja Kallas, third left, Netherlands' Prime Minister Dick Schoof, center left, and Croatia's Prime Minister Andrej Plenkovic, right, during a round table meeting at an EU Summit in Brussels, Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025.

Associated Press

By LORNE COOK
Associated Press

BRUSSELS (AP) — Belgium's prime minister said on Thursday that his European partners must share the risk of using billions of dollars in frozen Russian assets that are held in his country to help keep Ukraine's economy and war effort afloat in coming years.

Ukraine's budget and military needs for 2026 and 2027 are estimated to total around \$153 billion, and the European Union's executive branch has been developing a plan to use Russia's frozen assets as collateral to drum up funds. The biggest tranche of those assets about \$225 billion worth are held in Belgium, and the government is wary of using the money without firm guarantees from other EU countries.

"If we want to give them to Ukraine, we have to do it all together," Belgian Prime Minister Bart De Wever told reporters as he arrived for a summit with his EU counterparts in Brussels. "If not, Rus-

sian retaliation might only hit Belgium. That's not very reasonable."

"We are a small country, and retaliation can be very hard. They might confiscate all kinds of monies of Western banks in Russia, confiscate the European-owned companies in Russia," he said.

The European Commission has described the plan as a "reparation loan."

In essence, EU countries would guarantee a loan to Ukraine of around \$165 billion of European money not taken from the assets themselves. Kyiv would only refund the EU once Russia pays significant war reparations to Ukraine for the massive destruction it has caused.

Should Moscow refuse, its assets would remain frozen. Russia has warned against the move. Earlier this month, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters that the EU's intentions "amount to plans to illegally confiscate Russian property in Russian, we call

it theft."

However, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen insisted that "we are not confiscating the assets, but we are taking the cash balances for a loan to Ukraine." She said that "Ukraine has to pay back this loan if Russia pays reparations."

"Russia is the perpetrator. It has caused the damage, and it has to be held accountable," von der Leyen said. She added that she thinks her team has found "a sound legal way to do this" and to get reluctant member countries onside. De Wever insisted on Thursday on seeing what that amounts to.

"I haven't even seen the legal basis for the decision yet," he said. "This seems to me the first step, if you want to take an important decision. This has never been done. Even during the Second World War, we didn't do this, so it's not a detail."

The European Central Bank and other EU countries that use the euro were also worried that such a move might undermine international confidence in Europe's single currency.

"We need to make sure that it is legally sound," Luxembourg Prime Minister Luc Frieden told reporters. "I think we made progress in the fact that there will not be a confiscation of these assets, because I think from a legal point of view that did not work."

The EU hopes that other countries will make similar moves, if Belgium signs up. Outside the bloc, some Group of Seven nations also hold frozen Russian assets. □



Police stand guard at the entrance of Ghana electoral commission office in Accra Ghana, Dec. 9, 2016.

Associated Press

Ghana police rescue 57 Nigerians in crackdown on human trafficking and cybercrime

By EDWARD ACQUAH
Associated Press

ACCRA, Ghana (AP) — Police in Ghana rescued 57 Nigerians trafficked to the West African country and arrested five people suspected of operating a cybercrime and human trafficking ring, authorities said Thursday.

Police raided a building in the suburb of the capital Accra on Wednesday, where the victims, between the ages of 18 and 26, were housed and forced to engage in online romance scams, the Criminal Investigations Department said Thursday in a statement.

The police retrieved 77 laptops, 38 mobile phones, two vehicles, three television sets, and other internet-enabled devices from the building.

The suspects allegedly lured their victims by promising them lucrative jobs and other opportunities in Ghana.

"Upon arrival, the victims, aged between 18 and 26 years, were coerced into engaging in online romance scams and other heinous activities," the police said.

The police said all the rescued victims were receiving the necessary care and support, but did not indicate when they would be sent back to their home countries. The trafficking of West African nationals to engage in online scams and prostitution is a common practice in Ghana in spite of multiple police operations to crack-down on perpetrators. Ghana's Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, the government agency responsible for enforcing the law on human trafficking, said in a report this year that it made 79 prosecutions and 54 convictions between 2023 and 2024.

Last month, Interpol said that it coordinated a crack-down on cybercrime which led to the arrests across 14 African countries of 260 people suspected in online romance and extortion scams. □

China to focus on speeding up self-reliance in science and tech in new economic plan

By **KEN MORITSUGU, HUI-ZHONG WU and CHAN HO-HIM**

Associated Press

BEIJING (AP) — China's ruling Communist Party said Thursday it will focus on speeding up self-reliance in science and technology, a long-running push that has become more pronounced as the U.S. has imposed increasingly tight controls on access to semiconductors and other high-tech items. The announcement by state media came in a communique after a four-day meeting that approved a draft of the party's next five-year development plan.

China faces "profound and complex" changes and rising uncertainty, it said. The communique did not directly mention the trade war with U.S. President Donald Trump. China's leader Xi Jinping is expected to meet Trump for talks in South Korea next week. Since returning to the White House, Trump has ramped up tariffs on imports in an effort to compel manufacturers to shift factories to the United States. That has added to pressure on the Chinese economy at



A worker installs scaffolding at a building under construction at the capital popular shopping district, in Beijing, Tuesday, Oct. 21, 2025.

a time when the leadership is struggling to resolve a prolonged downturn in the property market and stoke stronger domestic demand.

But China has managed to keep exports growing by shifting to other markets, and the statement signaled the government is confident it can counter external threats with domestic

policy tools, said Gary Ng, a senior economist at Natixis, a French investment bank. "It means China will likely demand more from the U.S. to reach a deal, if one is to be reached," he said.

The communique contained few surprises, largely echoing the policy direction set out by Chinese leader Xi Jinping, who wants to build China into

a tech leader and global power with a robust military able to command respect and exert international influence. It provided only a broad overview of the coming 2026-2030 five-year plan, indicating its scope without details. More information may be released in the coming days, but the full plan won't be known until March, when the legis-

Associated Press

lature gives a rubber-stamp approval to the plan at its annual meeting.

"The general impression of the communique is that it highlights much more continuity than change," said Xin Sun, a senior lecturer in Chinese and East Asian Business at King's College London.

Ng said that compared to the previous plan five years ago, the government is deepening its push for technological self-sufficiency, income redistribution and a transition to clean energy.

The country's industrial policy has driven the rapid development of the electric car and wind and solar industries in recent years and has turned now to robotics and artificial intelligence.

The party will "accelerate the all-out green transformation of economic and social development," the statement said.

It said that China would continue to boost domestic demand and spending, an objective that economists said is important for the country's economic growth, though it didn't signal any significant change to that approach. □

International Criminal Court judges reject jurisdiction challenge in Duterte case

By **MOLLY QUELL**

Associated Press

THE HAGUE, Netherlands (AP) — International Criminal Court judges on Thursday rejected a challenge to jurisdiction in the case of former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, who is accused of involvement in dozens of killings as part of his so-called war on drugs when in office.

Defense lawyers for the 80-year old Duterte argued that because the Philippines left the court before prosecutors opened a formal investigation into the mass killings, the ICC didn't have the authority to continue with the proceedings. A pretrial panel of judges dismissed the motion. Countries can't "abuse"

their right to withdraw from the Rome Statute "by shielding persons from justice in relation to alleged crimes that are already un-

der consideration," the 32-page decision says.

Prosecutors announced in February 2018 that they would open a preliminary

investigation into the violence. In a move that human rights activists say was aimed at escaping accountability, Duterte, who was president at the time, announced a month later that the Philippines would leave the court.

The investigation was formally opened in 2021.

Nick Kauffman, Duterte's lead lawyer, said that he plans to continue the challenge to the jurisdiction. The defense "anticipated this decision and will appeal it," he told The Associated Press. The charges against Duterte date from Nov. 1, 2011, when he was still mayor of the southern city of Davao, to March 16, 2019, when the withdrawal became effective.

Last month, judges postponed a pretrial hearing over concerns about Duterte's health. His lawyers asked for the proceedings to be delayed indefinitely, saying their client is "not fit to stand trial." The court also decided that Duterte must remain in detention, because he's a flight risk.

The Duterte administration moved to suspend the global court's investigation before, arguing in late 2021 that Philippine authorities were already looking into the same allegations and the ICC a court of last resort therefore didn't have jurisdiction. Appeals judges at the ICC rejected those arguments and ruled in 2023 that the investigation could resume. □



Former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte takes oath during a senate inquiry on the so-called war on drugs during his administration at the Philippine Senate, on Oct. 28, 2024, in Manila, Philippines.

Associated Press

Alto Vista chapel and its link to Aruba's origins

According to Etnia Nativa, in the 18th century most of the inhabitants of Aruba were indigenous who lived on the north coast, one of the largest communities lived in Alto Vista.

As they were very religious, they had a chief with the name of Antonio Silvester who guided them in the Christian life and it was he who decided to build a stone chapel with a roof of corn rods, which would serve as a place of prayer. In 1750 it was blessed by Father Algemesi who came from Coro-Venezuela and appointed Domingo Antonio Silvester as the island's first prosecutor in the name of the Spanish crown and Rome. In 1752 the prosecution passed into the hands of Antonio Silvester's son-in-law, Miguel Álvarez, who continued to guide the parishioners in their prayers.

According to the book, The History of Alto Vista by R.H. Nooyen, it is not known when Domingo Antonio Silvester came to Aruba from Venezuela. The elders believe Antonio was a Spaniard. In 1780, father Joseph

Antonio de la Vegal called Bernardino Silvester, one of Antonio's sons with his wife Anna Cathalina Tromp, "neighbors and naturals of the island Aruba" and thus they became natives.

At the end of the eighteen century many inhabitants the island died as a result of the black fever epidemic and since people believed that the Alto Vista area was the most infected, they began to build their homes further south within the Noord area, so the town of Noord began to grow into a community till getting its own Church. However religious festivals continued to be celebrated at this sacred native place, with the custom of arriving in procession to Alto Vista.

Two-hundred years after the beautiful time of Alto Vista, people can no longer see much of the town of Alto Vista from 1750. With a lot of work they found the old foundations of the Church of the Queen of the Holiest Rosary to build a new chapel on the same place. The entire surrounding area was empty and



desolated, making it hard to imagine that Alto Vista was a town at all. A hundred years later, people can see the remains of around twenty houses, some made of stone and others of clay. Nowadays, only around six of these houses remain.

South of the chapel in the yard two graves can be observed, there was the cemetery which father Pablo de Algemesi blessed.

It is not certain, but it is believed that the two graves belong to Antonio Silvester and Miguel Alvares, according to Nooyen. About 50 meters near the chapel there are still the markings of an old house, where Antonio and Bernardino Silvester would have lived. About 200 meters from the chapel there is a water tank which the locals call Tanki Cacique. In the past this tank was closed. But mostly water was brought

out from the Poz di Noord, a well dug in the sand.

The chapel can be viewed from basically any point in the north side, even from Paradera and Sero Plat. All the historical remains around the chapel provide us with an idea on how the old people of Alto Vista used to live. Don't miss the opportunity to visit a place of historical significance with a window to Aruba's past. □

Aruba's Nature is to be Cherished

The national park Arikok comprises almost 18 % of the island. Its rugged terrain, desert-like hills filled with tall cacti, breathtaking coastline and protected local flora and fauna welcome you to be explored. There is numerous wildlife to discover like for example the sea turtle who lays his eggs on the park's beaches. There are more places on the island that

are a preserved area like the Bubali Plas which is a bird sanctuary.

The national park Arikok takes you on a memorable journey of the island's past offering unique geological, cultural and historical sites. These can all be enjoyed and explored either on your own or during guided tours. A wide variety of educational and informative

programs and fun activities is available.

Did you know that four of the in total seven species of sea turtle lay their eggs on Aruba's beaches? In the national park, a Least Tern (*Sternula antillarum*) keeps a strict eye on a very special event taking place below on the beach: a majestic Leatherback (*Dermochelys coriacea*) heads back to sea after laying her eggs, while another nest laid 2 months ago by the same female hatches. A very rare occurrence of daytime nesting and hatching. Sea turtles prefer nesting in the cool and dark hours of the night. And hatchlings usually wait for the cue of cooling surface sand before emerging.

Bubali Magic

This beautiful close-up image of the pink bird is cour-

tesy of Michiel Oversteegen of the Aruba Birdlife Conservation. This important foundation showcases and builds awareness of Aruba's birds and other native flora and fauna. You may have seen a 'pink cloud' lately at the Bubali or Spanish Lagoon Wetlands areas? It's most likely to be Roseate Spoonbills (*Ajaia ajaja*) or 'Chucharon Cora' as they are known in Papiamentu. This unusual looking bird forages in shallow muddy water while sweeping its flattened bill from side to side to catch small fish, crustaceans and other aquatic invertebrates. The Roseate Spoonbill remains an uncommon sight as they are vulnerable to degradation of feeding and nesting habitats (Wetlands). (Source: arikok national park)

The affore mentioned is just

a part of what Aruba's nature has to offer. We cannot stress enough to go, see for yourself. The island has the most beautiful beaches but it is also worthwhile to go beyond this and get an idea of our entire island. Lately there is a discussion going on about the effect certain activities have on our nature, for example the ATV vehicles cause a lot of dust, noise and leave tire tracks. Animals live in these areas where the vehicles run, often with high speed and with detrimental consequences to flora and fauna. Motorized vehicles are forbidden to drive on the sand dunes in the Northern part of the island and all beaches in Aruba are forbidden for any motorized vehicle. Treasure our island to enjoy it like you do: as a tropical and natural paradise. We truly appreciate it! □





QUALITY APARTMENTS AND SUITES



www.arubaqualityapartments.com

All Fully Furnished w/Kitchen, Airco, Cable Tv, FREE WIFI (in and outside rooms).
Swimming Pool, Gym, Library, Laundry Room & BBQ Sets.
Less than 1 mile from Eagle Beach & 2 Large Supermarkets.

FEEL FREE TO CONTACT OR VISIT US.

Mon-Fri: 8am - 7pm. Sat & Sun: 9am - 5pm. Worldwide calls: (297)-582-0697

+1 866 470 1411

Schotlandstraat 70, Oranjestad, Aruba

Email: info@arubaqualityapartments.com | Whatsapp: (297) 593 9647
Website: www.arubaqualityapartments.com

Ever heard of the cah'i orgel? A key instrument in Aruban folklore music

(Oranjestad)—The cah'i orgel music box is an important and unique instrument that is used on the ABC islands in the Dutch Caribbean. This instrument is a staple in our folklore music, and its significance in the traditions of Aruba has and continues to bring together the old and young.

The origin of the cah'i orgel is said to have come from Europe around 150 years ago. A cross breed between the barrel piano and the organ, the most popular stories said that the instrument came from either England or Germany, but made its way to Italy down to Venezuela, where in 1881, Mr. Horatio Sprock (1866-1949) from Curacao was first introduced to it. After that, Sprock made his own cah'i orgel "Josefina", and successfully debuted it on the

streets of Barquisimeto. Back in Curacao, he started his own cah'i orgel business along with his brother Luis. In Aruba, it is said that the cah'i orgel was introduced by Rufo Wever, who later in his career became one of the composers for the Aruban national anthem.

Rufo Wever was a young musician in 1937 when he established his own cah'i orgel business on the island. Before that he experimented with his uncle's cah'i orgel, and he over the years he learned to build and repair the instrument. In fact, he was incredibly skilled in this, and he was one of the few to have recognized from the start that the cah'i orgel is an instrument that needs preserving.

As mentioned, the cah'i orgel is a music box. made from

mahogany wood, it contains a cylinder with a maximum of eight music pieces. By rotating the lever on the front side of the box, the cah'i orgel produces music similar to that of a piano, and is accompanied often by someone else playing the "wiri", a percussion instrument made out of steel and reminiscent to the Spanish guiro. Back then, you would often also find someone playing the triangle alongside the cah'i orgel and wiri. In Aruba, the cah'i orgel and wiri is used for traditional music genres, such as the Aruban waltz, tumba, mazurka and more.

Fun fact: another name for the cah'i orgel is the "tingilingi box." □

Source: "E Cilinder Magico entre Aruba y Curaçao" by Marilyn Alcalá-Wallé, Herta Parabirsing-Balentina and Nidia Rosaria-Wallé.



Aruba's first Ombudsman and what she can mean for you



(Oranjestad)—Last year Aruba marked a milestone with the introduction of the first Ombudsman of Aruba. Jurima Bryson, appointed on October 1st 2024, is proud to represent Aruba and is prepared to help both locals and tourists with their concerns.

What is the role of the Ombudsman?

In a nutshell, the Ombudsman is the middle man between you and government or semi-government agencies. This means that as a local or as a visitor of Aruba, you can file a complaint to the bureau of the Ombudsman against government and semi-government agencies.

Already left the island? No problem. The Ombudsman

of Aruba can still receive and handle your complaint even from abroad. You only have to provide a way for them to reach you.

Because this is the first time Aruba has an Ombudsman, the bureau office is still not in operation, but Ombudsman Bryson assured that the office will be open sometime in the second half of the year. In the mean time, you can follow the bureau on Instagram and Facebook. "We provide almost daily information so they can understand the role of the Ombudsman, what she can do for them and which kinds of complaints they can submit."

Follow the ombudsman on Instagram: @ombudsmanaruba and Facebook: Ombudsman Aruba □

Celebrating Forty Years – Weekly Free Slot or Table Play for all Qualified Club Members

50/30
Friday!

We're giving away
\$50 Free Slot Play
to lucky slot and table
game players **every**
30 minutes from
7pm to Midnight!

THE SHOPS AT ALHAMBRA CASINO

Auntie Anne's Pretzels | Aruba Aloe | Baskin-Robbins
Juan Valdez Café | Hungry Piranha - Pizza, Wings & More
The Brownstone Ribs and Seafood | The Market
Shalom Body & Soul Spa | Moments & Memories Jewelry
Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
Shalom Hair & Nails Bar | Twist of Flavors | Dunkin Donuts
Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
Fusion Restaurant, Tapas, Wine & Piano Bar

Alhambra
CASINO AND SHOPS

Open daily 10am to 3am | J.E. Irausquin Blvd #47 | 288.9000 | casinoalhambra.com

Play Responsibly. Visit www.gamblersanonymous.org if you or someone you know has a gambling problem.



Aruba's kite flying tradition



(Oranjestad)—Every year for King's Day, Arubans gather with friends and family to fly kites. Big or small, paper or plastic, blue skies fill up with these colorful flying contraptions, brightening our yearly celebration of the Dutch Monarch.

The tradition of flying kites starts at home in the weeks leading up to King's Day. These kites were traditionally made with things found in the nearby *mondi** and in the kitchen at home. Using dried up cactus sticks for the frame, old news papers, and glue made from flour, water and salt to dry faster (some people even use cornstarch slurry as glue), kids usually make their own kites with their friends, parents or other close family members. Tails are made from old bed sheets, ripped and tied together to create a long string of fabric trailing behind the back end of the kite. To finish off the process, people used fish lines or thin rope to tie three corners of the kite together. Another long string of rope is tied in the knotted center and bundled up, used to steer the kite as it flies in the air. Decorating the kite was especially important, and children would use paint to create their own designs—the more colorful, the better!

People usually fly their kites in big open fields, like empty soccer and baseball fields found all around the island around

noon, when the sun is at its brightest.

In the past few years, kite flying has become a sport in which groups of people would battle against each other to see whose kite is the biggest, the prettiest, and whose could fly flawlessly and longer in the air. For this year's celebration, Centro di Bario Playa Pabao located in Madiki is organizing another edition of their kite flying event with different categories of height starting at 8AM.

Gather your family and be a part of this colorful Aruban tradition in celebration of our King Willem-Alexander's birthday!

*Mondi: Aruban woods. □



Blackstone Beach

(Oranjestad)—Named after its most recognizable feature, the Blackstone Beach almost represents the opposite of the typical Aruban beaches. For one, it has black sand and is covered in black smooth stones. Secondly, it lies on the northern side of the island, away from the white sandy beaches of in the southern region. So, if you feel up for something different—or if it's opposite day, visit the Blackstone Beach.

Blackstone Beach shows the more natural side of Aruba: the stones that cover the beaches and the shape of it has been crafted for thousand years via volcanic eruptions, coral reef movements and wave activity of the rural northern part of the island.

Located further east to the Natural Bridge and Andicuri Beach, the Blackstone Beach is relatively easy to access. Once you get passed the Ayo Rock Formation, take the Andicuri road leading up to Andicuri Beach. There, you can park your car and take a 1km hike towards Blackstone Beach.

This beach forms part of the Arikok National Park and is therefore a site that is preserved. This is why it is also relatively untouched by commercial influences. Despite being called a beach, do note that it is not advised to swim in the water, as the current is very strong and can easily stray you further in the wild ocean. However, you can still enjoy a spectacular view of the stones and the northern ocean that stretches out in front of the beach and take a picture with your friends or family! □



Basic driving rules on Aruba: Roundabouts

(Oranjestad)—Have you ever felt confused when you're driving on the highways or backstreets of Aruba? Then we present a simple guide to some of the basic rules of Aruban traffic, along with some tips for things to look out for.

Speed limit

Legally, the speed limit on the four-lane highways is 80 km/h. This speed limit also counts for the main roads that are connected to the highways. The minimum speed is 50 km/h. Most people drive around 60 km/h on the main roads and about 70 km/h on the highways. There are also areas that indicate a speed limit on a sign; these are usually around populated and school areas.

The four-lane highways contain the left-lane, also known as the "fast" lane for each direction. Here is where vehicles can drive up to the maximum speed. However, legally it is not permitted to drive for long periods of time on the left lane. This lane is primarily designed for drivers to switch lanes before a roundabout, for example, if your exit on the roundabout is on your far left. The general lane to drive in—both at maximum and minimum speed—is on the right lane.

Roundabouts

Speaking of roundabouts, it



is important to know where you have to enter and drive on the roundabout to make your exit. A good rule of thumb is to count the exits starting from your right side. So, exit 1 would be on your right; exit 2 would be straight ahead; exit 3 would be on your far left and exit 4 would lead to the road paralleled to the one you're on, heading in the other direction.

Most roundabouts have these 4 exits, so they are relatively simple. When you're driving on the four-lane highway, it is important to know when to switch to the left lane to make your exit: if your exit is on your far

left (exit 3), then you need to switch to the left lane on the high way before nearing the roundabout so you can take the path that leads you directly to your exit. If your exit is on your right or if you're going straight ahead, you can keep driving in the right lane of the highway.

It's also important to know that vehicles about to enter the roundabout must yield to those already on it. A good rule of thumb is to look out if someone is coming from your left side.

However, other roundabouts can be quite tricky to navigate...

Watty Vos Boulevard (the "paperclip" roundabout)

Probably the biggest roundabout on the island, the "paperclip" roundabout on the Watty Vos Boulevard is one of the trickier roundabouts that could—and has—caused confused among both tourists and locals. However, once you take a good look at it, it's fairly simple. The basis is just the same as a regular roundabout (left exit? left lane! etc.), but instead of having four different exits like on a regular roundabout, now you have two extra; one on the right and the other on the left side of the roundabout. The rules don't change at all, you just have to keep an extra eye open.

Airport roundabout

Ah, yes. The infamous airport roundabout. The favorite roundabout amongst local, because of its easy (hard) lanes that never (always) cause confusion among drivers. Sarcasm aside, this roundabout can be tricky to enter, especially when you're driving from the direction of the airport heading. When you're driving away from the airport reaching the roundabout, you'll be faced with three lanes. The far right lane is to take the exit 1 out heading east (right lane of highway). The middle exit is

used for exit 1 (left lane of highway), 2 and 3. The far left exit is used to only exit on exit 3 (left lane of highway) and 4.

"Las Americas" roundabout

The Las Americas roundabout is located near the Talk of the Town hotel, west from the airport roundabout. This roundabout may look like a regular roundabout—and for the most part, it is. However, when you are driving from the east going in the direction of town, please take note that there are two exits on your right.

When you're driving towards this roundabout, you'll notice that the road becomes wider, splitting into two lanes. The right lane is used to take the first and second exit on the right. If you want to exit straight ahead, you must drive on the left lane!

It's always scary to drive in new places where the traffic may look and work differently, but once you get it right once, you'll get the hang of it in no time. Additionally, all roundabouts and roads on Aruba have signs and arrows painted on the road to help guide you. So take your time, keep your eyes open and don't forget to wear a seat belt! □



Get to know the history of the gold industry on Aruba



(Oranjestad)— We have talked about the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruin before and its brief history during the gold industry on Aruba, but get to know a little more about the history of the “Aruban Gold Rush.”

The first hint of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when rumors about gold being found in dug up treasure chests of the Spanish colonial era prompted the first official exploration for gold on the island, commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some specks of gold, it was not enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself. It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young farmer boy named Willem Rasmijn found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep in the area of Rooi Fluit on the north coast. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for \$70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold.

When the colonial governor in Curacao, Governor Cantz'laar, heard about the news, he sent his adjutant, Capitan van Raders, to start harvesting gold. This was in July 1824. In August of that same year, the governor followed suit to the island, accompanied by high-ranking military officials. When citizens started swarming the area in search for gold, The Netherlands sent more troops to safe guard the gold.

Prominent places where gold was found was in Daimari, Wacobana, Arikok, Rooi Fluit, Hadicouradi and later West punt, where gold ore was found. Because of a lack in advanced technology and materials to harvest the gold, the process took a more primitive approach: Clay rocks containing traces of gold were left to dry in the sun. Then, workers would start chipping the clay away on a large canvas to catch the gold particles that were left behind after the wind blew away the dust from the clay.

In the harvest period of 1824-1825, there was a total of 71,000 kilos collected through commissioned harvesting. Locals themselves reportedly found about 25 pounds worth of gold in the nearby rivers. The following years after that first big harvest, commission work fell off, and in 1828, the director of the goldmines, Johan Gravenhorst, decided to halt harvesting.

Almost 40 years later, the London-based Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was granted concession. The firm built their gold mines on Bushiribana, and in the port of Oranjestad a long road that connected the gold mill to the port. The ores themselves came from Sero Plat en Sero Cristal.

By this point, workers were still using primitive methods to harvest the ores. For example, when someone had to go into the mines, there were no stairs or lifts; the person had to be brought down in a big bucket, with two or more workers holding the bucket by a thick rope above ground. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. reportedly operated until 1899, and right after the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. was established, coincidentally also based in London. This time, the gold mill in Balashi was built, and more mines were dug up all around the island. The gold ores that were found were transported via track engine, locally called the “trekinchi”. Despite being more equipped for the job, the Aruba Gold Concession Ltd. could not produce any real profit, and so the concession was terminated just eight years later, in 1908.

A local firm, the “Aruba Goud Maatschappij” (Aruba Gold Company) took over the concession, along with all the materials and equipment. In the beginning, the company saw good profit, and for a while, the island's economy depended primarily on the mining and harvesting of gold. But just like its predecessors, the streak of luck for the Aruba Gold Company came to an end when WWI broke out.

The main reason why production stopped this time was reportedly because of a lack in dynamite for extracting the ores from the mines, as well as a lack in raw materials like German cyanide for the refining process. By the time the war ended, the equipment that was left at Balashi were too old to use again. After the war, gold production on the Aruba was left to a standstill.

According to an issue in Aruba Esso News paper in 1953, Henny Eman wanted to start up digging again, this time using independent miners. He argued that there was proof of more gold to be discovered. Plus, hiring independent miners would boost the island's employment rate.

When it was proven that gold was in fact still present, the executive board on the island promised to fund the project only if the gold dug up proved to be valuable. However, nothing else was reported after this, so it could be concluded that there was no real profitable market on the island anymore.

The ruins of the Bushiribana and Balashi Gold Mills are still standing, and open for the public to visit. These structures offer a glance into the past, to a time where Aruba experienced one of its first wave of industrialization. Today, these structures are persevered as historical monuments. □

Source:

1. “De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over the geschiedenis van Aruba)” by Evert Bongers.
2. Aruba Esso News, 1953 issue.

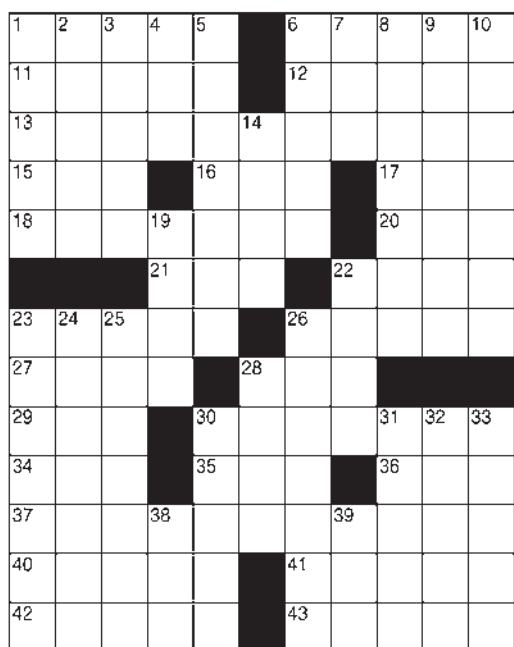
CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

- ACROSS**
- 41 On the way out
1 Deck of fortunes
6 Origami need
11 Love, in Lille
12 Full of energy
13 Tool with a bubble
15 Annex
16 Be a contender
17 Mine yield
18 Take back
20 Finger count
21 Bowler, for one
22 Swift
23 Olympics award
26 Sailors
27 Made fun of
28 Use a needle
29 Zero
30 Apparition
34 Court worker: Abbr.
35 Feel poorly
36 Dr.'s org.
37 Extremely hot garden item
40 Spine-tingling

DOWN

- 1 Perp zapper
2 Plentiful
3 Stirs up
4 Owned by us
5 Far from important
6 Showed fear
7 Hoppy brew
8 Crucial
9 Highest peak
10 Lets up
14 Color
19 Niger neighbor
22 Forest youngster
23 Oversees
24 Nickname
25 "Night-mare Alley" director
26 Sailor's balance
28 Fleet unit
30 Party spreads
31 Short putt
32 Troubling signs
33 Homer's wife
38 Tentative taste
39 "The Raven" writer



10-31

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

10-31

CRYPTOQUOTE

IYCQXL NCOVGUI, YCUGA

NGGY; ZOG HRIY EZPIG, YUCQX

ZU YUGRY! — UPIYL NCIQEGU
Cryptoquote: BY THE PRICKING
OF MY THUMBS, SOMETHING WICKED THIS
WAY COMES. — WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE,
"MACBETH"



Cruise ship Schedule: Oct. 14 - 26 2025

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	CALLS
TUE	14	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	23.00	C	1
WED	15	SERENADE OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	08.00 06.00	23.00 ****	C E	1 1
FRI	17	CELEBRITY SILHOUETTE	07.00	17.00	C	1
SUN	19	NORWEGIAN ESCAPE CARIBBEAN PRINCESS FREEWINDS - Dept.	07.00 09.00 ****	17.00 22.00 22.30	B C E	1 1 -
TUE	21	SERENADE OF THE SEAS	08.00	23.00	C	1
WED	22	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS OASIS OF THE SEAS FREEWINDS	08.00 07.00 06.00	23.00 16.00 ****	C I E	1 1 1
THU	23	EURODAM	08.00	17.00	C	1
SUN	26	FREEWINDS - Dept.	****	22.30	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basic but important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.



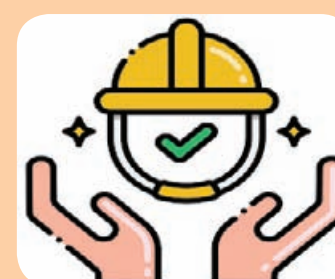
Drinking water

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.



Electrical power

Aruba generally operates on 110V to 127V supply voltage and 60Hz. There are also three types of outlets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.



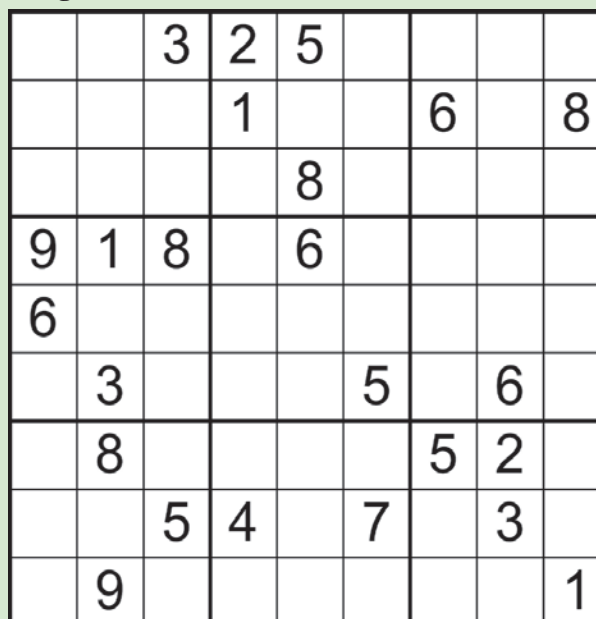
Safety

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occur, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

King Classic Sudoku



Difficulty: ★★★★★

10/24

Answer to previous puzzle

3	8	1	2	7	5	9	4	6
6	7	2	4	9	1	8	3	5
4	9	5	6	8	3	1	2	7
8	1	7	3	4	6	5	9	2
2	6	9	1	5	7	3	8	4
5	4	3	9	2	8	7	6	1
1	2	4	5	3	9	6	7	8
7	3	6	8	1	2	4	5	9
9	5	8	7	6	4	2	1	3

Difficulty: ★★★

10/23

©2025 King Features Syndicate, Inc.

The Gilded Age of Private Equity for the Masses

Amy C. Arnott of Morningstar

For most people, it's natural to assume that if something is exclusive to the wealthiest echelons of society, it must be better. Asset management firms looking to access trillions of "retail" investor dollars explicitly reference this exclusivity when marketing private equity offerings. But investors should be wary when fund marketers talk about "democratizing investing" or opening access to areas previously only available to the elite.

Reasons to be wary

Investing is already democratized. The SEC eliminated fixed trading commissions in 1975, and innovation has made investing in publicly traded stocks cheaper and easier ever since. Online trading platforms allow people of modest means to easily buy shares in almost any publicly traded company. The advent of cheap, passively managed mutual funds and exchange-traded funds has made building a diversified portfolio easier and more affordable than ever.

Moreover, public capital markets are a good thing. Investors who buy publicly traded stocks or bonds get transparency about their investment with ready liquidity. Meanwhile, private capital investments are often opaque and illiquid.

There has been considerable debate about whether private investments generate higher returns. Measuring performance for private equity and private debt is not straightforward. Most industry benchmarks use internal rates of return, which aren't really comparable to traditional performance measures like total return.

Researchers have examined some of the findings related to this topic. A 2020 paper by Ludovic Phalippou, "An Inconvenient Fact: Private Equity Returns & The Billionaire Factory," argues that net of fees, returns for private equity funds have been in line with those of the public equity markets since 2006.



This Oct. 24, 2016 file photo shows dollar bills in New York.

Associated Press

PitchBook, which is part of Morningstar, has also gathered data on public market equivalent returns for private equity. Based on those metrics, private equity funds with 2020-2023 vintage years did not generate positive excess performance returns, although funds with 2011-2019 vintages fared significantly better.

Semiliquid private equity and venture capital funds. Even if private capital had a performance edge in the past, there's no guarantee that this advantage will continue or that those managers will be the better performers. As Morningstar's Jeff Ptaknotes, private equity funds typically have widely dispersed returns, meaning a large gap between the top and bottom performers. Your

returns could differ wildly from those of benchmark indexes.

As large private equity firms increasingly tap retail capital, the instruments available to average investors probably won't be the best. Investment sage Bill Bernstein stated: "The first people who invested in private equity got the filet mignon and the lobster tails, and the Vanguards and Fidelities of this world are going to wind up with tuna noodle casserole."

On the venture capital side, getting access to the next startup unicorn early in the game sounds appealing. But for every SpaceX, thousands of early-stage companies never take off, and there is additional risk from leveraged exposure to privately held companies.

Final thoughts

When you hear about the virtues of access to investments that were off-limits, it's worth considering who really benefits. As passively managed funds with rock-bottom expense ratios continue to gain market share, asset management firms are pressed to find new sources of high-margin revenue. □



Editor

Caribbean Speed Printers N.V.
Aruba Bank N.V. Acc. #332668
Caribbean Mercantile Bank N.V.
Acc. #23951903
RBC Royal Bank Acc. #1330772

Editors

Pilar Flores
Richard Brooks
Angenette Figueroa
Oriana Geerman

Sales

Mark Gomes
Sulaika Croes

Classifieds

classified@cspnv.com

Distribution and Collection

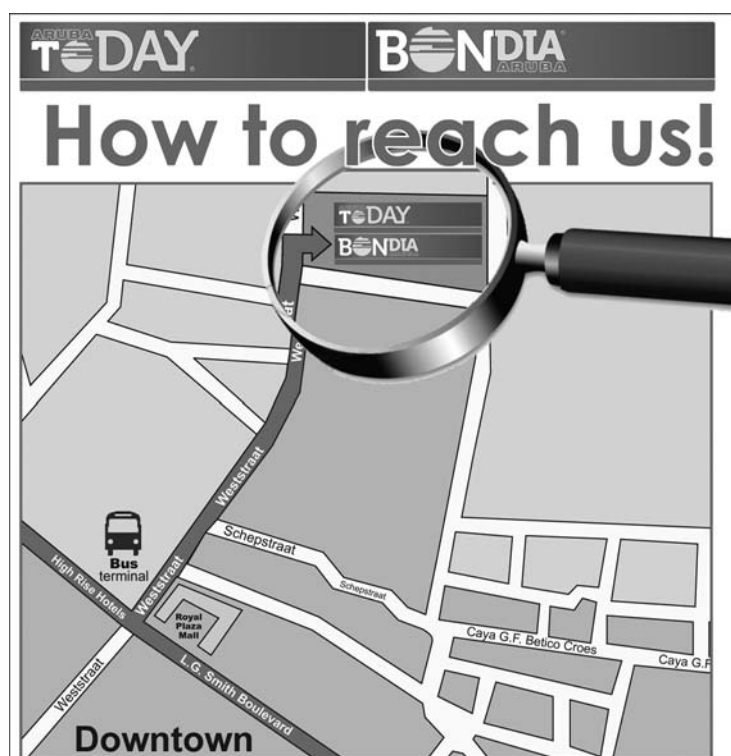
accounting@bondia.com

Social / Website

Juan Luis Pinto

Weststraat 22
T: 582-7800

E: news@arubatoday.com
W: www.arubatoday.com
f @ArubaTodayNews



HEALTH

DOCTOR ON DUTY

Oranjestad

Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

San Nicolas

Imsan 24 hours
Tel. 524 8833

PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:

Sta. Anna: Tel. 586 8181

San Nicolas:

Aloe: Tel. 584 4606

OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850

Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002

Urgent Care 586 0448

Walk-In Doctor's Clinic

+297 588 0539

EMERGENCY

Police	100
Oranjestad	527 3140
Noord	527 3200
Sta. Cruz	527 2900
San Nicolas	584 5000
Police Tipline	11141
Ambulancia	911
Fire Dept.	115
Red Cross	582 2219

TAXI SERVICES

Taxi Tas	587 5900
Prof. Taxi	588 0035
Taxi D.T.S.	587 2300
Taxi Serv. Aruba	583 3232
A1 Taxi Serv.	280 2828

TRAVEL INFO

Aruba Airport	524 2424
American Airlines	582 2700
Avianca	588 0059
Jet Blue	588 2244
Surinam	582 7896

AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank	Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired	Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous	Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous	Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia Relacional	Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes	Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention	Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club	Tel. 525 2672

General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

Like us on
Facebook



ARUBA TODAY NEWS

M. Night Shyamalan's latest plot twist? Teaming with Nicholas Sparks on a novel and upcoming film

By ALICIA RANCILIO

Associated Press

Even M. Night Shyamalan

— known for making darker movies like "The Sixth Sense" and "Signs" goes looking for the light sometimes.

"I just finished three really dark movies, 'Old,' 'Knock at the Cabin' and 'Trap,' which are really edgy movies where the characters are super, super dark and complicated, and I wanted to do something different," said the director.

He found an interesting opportunity to collaborate on a new supernatural romance novel called "Remain" with Nicholas Sparks. Yes, that Nicholas Sparks king of romantic dramas like "The Notebook" and "A Walk to Remember."

Co-authored books are a hot trend right now in the publishing world. Reese Witherspoon and Harlan Coben have a new novel out. James Patterson has teamed up with Bill Clinton and Dolly Parton on books. This collab, however, is different in that Shyamalan had written the screenplay and Sparks agreed to write a novel based on that story. A "Remain" film starring Jake Gyllenhaal and Phoebe Dynevor already wrapped production and will be released next year.

"I don't think anybody has ever done what we just did, which was take the same story and simultane-



This combination of images shows M. Night Shyamalan, left, and Nicholas Sparks.

Associated Press

ously go do our separate things," said Sparks. "It isn't in linear fashion. It's two people doing two different art forms from the same story. I trusted him 100% to make the best film version of that story possible and he trusted me."

The two crossed paths years ago when Shyamalan was asked if he would want to adapt Sparks' novel "The Notebook" into a feature film. The job ended up going to Nick Cassavetes, but Shyamalan said Sparks' work "always represented something magical to me." It meant something to him that he would be entrusted with a story so beloved.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Sparks and Shyamalan talk about teaming up, scary mov-

ies and chicken salad. Answers have been edited for clarity and brevity.

AP: At first thought, you two working together seems like an unlikely duo. but the supernatural and romance genres have a lot in common.

SPARKS: We're not the first to dabble in this. The biggest movie of 1990 was "Ghost." Shakespeare used to put ghosts into his plays.

SHYAMALAN: I think love is a supernatural conceit. It's a mythology we all buy into, but it is still a mythology, a supernatural mythology that there's a "one." The "destined one" that you meet in the coffee shop and that you know it was meant to be, and then all the things that happened because you met.

AP: Night, you say you approached Gyllenhaal at the beginning of the year about this role. When you did that, did you tell him it would also be a novel written by Sparks?

SHYAMALAN: I must have. But it was such an unusual moment because I had finished writing the screenplay, pressed save, rushed to get in the car to go to New York for my daughter's birthday. In the car the phone rings, and it's Jake. And I'm like, "What's up, man?" We hadn't talked in five years, something more. And he's like, "I'd love to be in one of your movies." And I went, "That is so weird. Where are you?" And he's like, "I'm in New York." I said, "Well, I'm going to New York. Want to have tea?" I had a gut feeling that the universe was doing something. So, I called my assistant. I said, "Print the script." So, we're just having tea and catching up. And he's telling me how in love he is and how he's just so happy and in love. And I said, "You know what? Here." He was in shock. He called me two days later and said, "I'm in. I love it." It was a weird kind of beautiful thing.

AP: Does the book follow the screenplay to the letter or vice versa?

SPARKS: Like any adaptation, no. The first thing I said when I read his script was, "Hey, this is great. Of

course, it's gonna be nothing like my novel. It's entirely different." Night said basically the same thing.

SHYAMALAN: I think for audiences, it'll be really interesting. They can point out the differences and ask, "Why did Nicholas do that with the character and the backstory? Why did Night do this?" Our dialogue isn't the same.

AP: Night, we're in spooky season with Halloween coming up. Are there any films besides your own that you recommend watching?

SHYAMALAN: "The Exorcist," of course, it's always there. There's "The Innocents." "The Haunting" 1963 film by Robert Wise. And the Japanese movie "Cure."

AP: Nicholas, have you made Night your famous chicken salad with Splenda?

SPARKS: No, I haven't. I did an interview with the New York Times where I offered the reporter some of my homemade chicken salad and it had Splenda. And whatever reason this blew up on social media. People thought it must be the most disgusting chicken salad ever.

So, I said, "No, it's delicious." We started making it on my book tour last year, handing it out to people. And in fact, Splenda put the recipe on its boxes. You can get them. □

Bon Jovi is hitting the road. Band announces first tour since Jon Bon Jovi's vocal cord surgery



Members of Bon Jovi front row from left, Tico Torres, Jon Bon Jovi, David Bryan, back row from left, Phil X, and Hugh McDonald pose for a portrait in New York on Oct. 19, 2016.

Associated Press

By MARIA SHERMAN

AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Decades into his career and the unthinkable happened. It was 2022, and Jon Bon Jovi began struggling through his songs. He saw a doctor who said one of his vocal cords was atrophying. He needed major surgery.

Bon Jovi had the procedure, and in the years since, has undergone extensive rehab, leading to the current moment: Next summer his band, Bon Jovi, will embark on their first tour in four years.

The "Forever Tour" kicks off with four nights at New York's Madison Square Garden before the band heads to Edinburgh, Scotland; Dublin and London.

"There is a lot of joy in this announcement joy that we can share these nights together with our amazing fans and joy that the band can be together," Bon Jovi said in a statement. "I've spoken extensively on my gratitude but I will say it again, I'm deeply grateful that the fans and the brotherhood of this band have been patient and allowed me the time needed to get healthy and prepare for touring. I'm ready and excited!"

Bon Jovi's last concert was held on April 30, 2022, in Nashville as seen in the 2024 Hulu documentary, "Thank You, Goodnight: The Bon Jovi Story." General sales launch Oct. 31, also at 10 a.m. Eastern, via bonjovi.com. □

NBA head coach and player charged in sprawling sports betting and Mafia-backed poker schemes

By ALANNA DURKIN RICHER,
TIM REYNOLDS and PHILIP
MARCELO

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP)—The head coach of the Portland Trail Blazers and a player for the Miami Heat were arrested Thursday along with more than 30 other people in two cases alleging sprawling criminal schemes to rake in millions by rigging sports bets and poker games involving Mafia families, authorities said.

Portland coach Chauncey Billups was charged with participating in a conspiracy to fix high-stakes card games in Las Vegas, Miami, Manhattan and the Hamptons that were backed by La Cosa Nostra organized crime families. Heat guard Terry Rozier is accused in a separate scheme to concoct fraudulent bets by exploiting insider information about NBA athletes.

The indictments unsealed in New York create a massive cloud for the NBA which opened its season this week and show how certain types of wagers are vulnerable to massive fraud in the growing, multi-billion-dollar legal sports-betting industry.

Joseph Nocella, the top federal prosecutor for the Eastern District of New York, called it “one of the most brazen sports corruption schemes since online sports betting became widely legalized in the United States.”

“My message to the defendants who’ve been rounded up today is this: Your winning streak has ended,” Nocella said. “Your luck has run out.”

Billups and Rozier expected to make their first court appearances

Both men face money laundering and wire fraud conspiracy charges and were expected to make initial court appearances later Thursday.

Also charged is former NBA assistant coach and player Damon Jones, who is accused of participating in both schemes.

“The fraud is mind bog-



This combo of images shows, from left, Portland Trail Blazers head coach Chauncey Billups, Miami Heat guard Terry Rozier and former Cleveland Cavaliers' Damon Jones.

Associated Press

gling,” FBI Director Kash Patel told reporters. “We’re talking about tens of millions of dollars in fraud and theft and robbery across a multi-year investigation.”

The alleged fraud, however, paled in comparison to the riches the athletes earned on the court. Billups, who was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame last year, had about \$106 million in career earnings over his 17-year career. Rozier made about \$160 million in his stops in Boston, Miami and Charlotte.

Billups and Rozier have been placed on leave from their teams, according to the NBA, which said it is cooperating with authorities. “We take these allegations with the utmost seriousness, and the integrity of our game remains our top priority,” the NBA said in a statement.

A message seeking comment was left Thursday morning with Billups. Rozier’s lawyer, Jim Trusty, said in a statement that his client is “not a gambler” and “looks forward to winning this fight.” Trusty said the FBI had previously said his client was not a target in the probe.

But at 6 a.m. “they called to tell me FBI agents were trying to arrest him in a hotel,” Trusty said. “It is unfortunate that instead of al-

lowing him to self-surrender they opted for a photo op. They wanted the misplaced glory of embarrassing a professional athlete with a perp walk. That tells you a lot about the motivations in this case.”

Messages were left Thursday at a phone number and email address listed in public records for Jones.

Mafia families profited off gambling scheme, officials say

The poker scheme cheated at least \$7 million out of unsuspecting gamblers who were lured into rigged games with the chance to compete against former professional basketball players like Billups and Jones.

The games were fixed using sophisticated cheating technology, such as altered card-shuffling machines, hidden cameras in poker chip trays, special sunglasses and even X-ray equipment built into the table to read the cards of unsuspecting players, authorities allege.

The scheme often made use of illegal poker games run by New York crime families that required them to share a portion of their proceeds with the Gambino, Genovese and Bonnano crime families, according to court papers.

Members of those families,

in turn, also helped commit violent acts, including assault, extortion and robbery, to ensure repayment of debts and the continued success of the operation, officials said in court documents.

Prosecutors asked a judge to detain Mafia members implicated in the case, as well as the ringleaders of the poker scheme. Prosecutors are arguing for releasing Billups and Jones but with “substantial bail conditions,” including a prohibition on any form of gambling and travel restrictions.

Athletes accused of leaving games early

In the sports betting scheme, Rozier and other defendants are accused of accessing private information from NBA players or coaches that could impact a player’s performance and giving that information to others so they could place wagers. Players sometimes altered their performance or took themselves out of games early to rig prop bets a type of wager that allows gamblers to bet on whether a player will exceed a certain statistical number, such as whether the player will finish over or under a certain total of points, rebounds or assists, according to the indictment.

In one instance, Rozier, while playing for the Charlotte Hornets in 2023, told people he was planning to leave the game early with a supposed injury, allowing gamblers to place wagers earning them tens of thousands of dollars, authorities say. That game against the New Orleans Pelicans raised eyebrows at the time. Rozier played the first 9 minutes and 36 seconds of the game before leaving, citing a foot issue. He did not play again that season.

Posts still online from March 23, 2023, show that some bettors were furious with sportsbooks that evening when it became evident that Rozier was not going to return to the game after the first quarter, with many turning to social media to say that something “shady” had happened regarding the prop bets involving his stats for that night.

The indictments contain the descriptions of several unnamed NBA players whose injury status and availability for certain games were the source of betting activity. Those players are not accused of any wrongdoing, and there is no indication that they would have even known what was being said about their status for those games.

Those players include LeBron James, Anthony Davis and Damian Lillard. Their identities are clear based on a review of corresponding injury reports surrounding games mentioned in the indictment. The indictments show that certain defendants shared information about the availability of those players in a game on March 24, 2023, involving the Portland Trail Blazers, and two games in 2023 and 2024 involving the Los Angeles Lakers.

The NBA had investigated Rozier previously.

He was in uniform as the Heat played the Magic on Wednesday in Orlando, Florida, in the season opener for both teams, though he did not play in the game. □

Angelina Melnikova caps return by edging Leanne Wong for gold at the world gymnastics championships

JAKARTA, Indonesia (AP) — Angelina Melnikova's return to international gymnastics after a three-year hiatus ended with the Russian in a familiar spot: atop the podium. The 25-year-old star edged American Leanne Wong for the all-around title at the world championships on Thursday, capping a long climb back to the top after Melnikova and other Russian athletes were barred from competing because of Russia's war with Ukraine. Melnikova recovered from a fall off the balance beam in the second rotation to post a total of 55.066, just ahead of Wong at 54.966. Zhang Qingying of China used a brilliant beam routine to earn bronze at 54.633. Kaylia Nemour of Algeria was fourth. The result Melnikova in first and Wong in second

was a repeat of the 2021 world championships, where Melnikova topped Wong for the crown just two months after leading Russia to gold and earning

a bronze in the all-around at the pandemic-delayed 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Plenty has happened since then. Melnikova, who briefly dabbled in politics be-

fore removing herself from consideration in an effort to maintain the "neutral athlete" designation under International Gymnastics Federation guidelines,

didn't compete outside of Russia for more than three years. Wong, a 22-year-old from Kansas, has spent the last four years as a fixture on the U.S. national team while also competing collegiately at Florida, juggling myriad business interests and studying to become a doctor. Melnikova easily topped qualifying earlier in the week. The finals, however, were a taut if error-riddled affair in which her second world title wasn't assured until her floor exercise score of 13.433 flashed at the end of the final rotation. The only contender who avoided a major mistake was Wong, who qualified in 10th but found herself in a position to become the latest in a line of American world champions that includes Simone Biles, Jordyn Wieber and Morgan Hurd. □



Individual Neutral Athlete Angelina Melnikova competes in the Women's All-Around Final during the 53rd Artistic Gymnastics World Championships in Jakarta, Indonesia, Thursday, Oct. 23, 2025. Associated Press